

CHAPTER ELEVEN (11)

GSP

**GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAMME
NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT & ECONOMIC**



CONCLUSION

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Conclusion

GSP2203
NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION

11.1 SUMMARY

This course has introduced students to the Government and Economy in Nigeria over there important periods: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial or independence. Very little is known about the pre-colonial government and economy of the various nations now grouped together as Nigeria. However, it is known that there were numerous nationalities characterized by the rise and fall of empires, kingdoms and other groupings. Government types ranged from village democracy through feudal, serfdom to semi-dictatorial. A clearer view of the latter part of the pre-colonial period is recorded as it relates to the Caliphate and Kingdoms sacked by the colonial powers. The economy of the pre-colonial days is believed to be private and subsistence and the procedures merely paid tribute (in form of products) to their rulers.

The colonial period witnessed the spatial definition of Nigeria, more or less, as we know it today. It was first presided over the Lord Lugard. The period also brought money economy, as well as organized political arrangements. The colonial authority (Britain) introduced a type of democracy and party politics. However, since the colonial interest was mainly exploitative, the parliamentary

democracy the British created in Nigeria was not exactly the same as the one in its country. For instance, it was not sovereign (that is independent) since it was attached to the government of England. Western-type formal education was also introduced during the colonial period, even though it was not designed to produce scientists and technologists. What is more, as an exploitative authority, the colonial government got involved in the economy of the colonized Nigeria, either through some organizations and corporations, or directly through its establishments. Thus, during the colonial period, there was a clear shift from the pre-colonial private, subsistence economy to a sort of mixed cash economy. However, the economic focus of the colonial government was clear and constant the production of raw materials in the colony for the industries of the home country.

The post-colonial period has been a mixed grill of political and economic arrangements, characterized by alternating civil democratic and military dictatorial governments. Up to the year 2000, the military ruled the country for more than 28 of the 40 independent years. The Nigerian people had, therefore, been traumatized and militarized thoroughly. No wonder that the first year or a return to civil democratic rule was witnessed by violent expressions of freedom based on geo-political, ethnic and religious tendencies. The economic focus during the period has shifted as many times as the government has changed hands and style. The federal democratic government initiated in the early 1960, (The First Republic) has changed through many phases of unity dictatorial governments, even though the term

“federal government” continued to be used describe the variations.

Concomitant with the shifts in the political economic focus are also shifts in international alliances and grouping favoured by the changing interest of the country. For example, the complete dependence on the West shifted to include the East during the period of the Civil War. Certain developments during the war forced Nigeria to knock at the Eastern doors as the Western ones became less wide open. Thus after the Civil War, the number of international alliances and bilateral cooperating treaties increased. However, the country remained constant in its commitment to African affairs and the activities of the OPEC, irrespective of what type of government was in power.

With such changes in the political fortunes of the country, the government grip on the economy also moved between “more” or “less” level of control. However, the grip was never removed, as the economy reached its highest during military regimes and ebbed, somewhat, during democratic dispensations, until the definite thrust towards capitalism in the late 1990s, restricted at first to privileged individuals, but thrown wider open from the year 2000.

11.2 PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMY FOR THE FUTURE

From the survey of the Nigerian Government and Economy undertaken in this course, it should be clear that Nigeria is blessed with rich human and natural resources. The country stands a very

good chance of being a world power if these human and natural resources are harnessed and used properly. The natural resources in terms of farm land, state that the only clear variable to see concerning the human resources is the sheer number of people – one out of every five Africans. To such people, sheer number does not make a rich resource, it is the quality. It is true that the quality of the human resources of Nigeria is bedeviled by a lot of negative parameters, not the least of which is the collapse of the country's education system. However, when one considers the achievements of many Nigerians in the advanced countries, it becomes convincing that Nigerians are intelligent human beings. Given the right opportunities at home, they would excel. Thus, the natural resources of the country and the intelligence of its people are the greatest assets of the country, and its prospects for future good governance and efficient economic development, as well as for a number of technological breakthroughs.

The problems are equally challenging. The manipulation of ethnicity and religion continues to divide the country and sets its people at cross-purposes. What is more, there is a territorial partitioning of these manipulated variables, the geographical dimensions of the manipulation of ethnicity and religion are the factors threatening to break the country apart. It is manipulation of these variables that has created injustice and makes bribery and corruption thrive in the country. Definitely, injustice, bribery, corruption and similar vices are the bane of good governance and viable economic development in Nigeria. These vices have enhanced the use of the high intelligence of Nigerians for negative

activities such Advanced Fee Fraud (alias 419), drug trafficking, human trafficking and other get-rich-quick engagements of Nigerians that have made them notorious internally. The vices and the resultant negative activities constitute great cogs in the wheel of Nigerian government and economy for the future. Unless they are overcome, governance may remain uncertain and the economy undeveloped. This is a challenge everyone should face squarely.

11.3 CONCLUSION

When all is said and done, it may be concluded that Nigeria has all it takes in terms of human and natural resources to forge good government and achieve a viable economic development, and thereby become a political and economic giant in the world. To achieve this goal, its people have to learn how to manipulate the variables of ethnicity and religion positively to enhance good governance and effective economic development. One may conclude by re-echoing that evergreen statement of the late Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir. Ahmadu Bello – 'let us understand our differences'. This is better than ignoring the differences and work put how to accommodate these differences in the search for just governance and equitable economic development in the country.